

Application No. 10/737,355

Amendments to the Drawings:

The Drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: 9, 18, 23 – 25, 29 A-D and 60 A-D. The Drawings are also objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference characters(s) not mentioned in the description: 18 A-D, 24 A-D and 25 A-D.

Reference numerals 9 and 23 have been removed from the text of the description. The A - D have been removed from reference numerals 29 and 60 in the text as well, although it is obvious for what the A-D stands for each reference number. Reference numerals 18, 24, and 25 in the text are all indicated as being plural reference numbers and correspond to 18A-D, 24A-D, and 25A-D. Applicants do not believe there is a need to explicitly write A-D next to each numeral as persons skilled in the art reading the application would understand the reference numbers as used. If the Examiner believes it to be absolutely necessary, Applicants can further amend the written description to recite A-D after these numerals throughout the application.

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Remarks

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his careful consideration of the application.

Claims 1 – 27 are pending in the application.

Claim Objections

Claims 23 and 24 are objected to by the Examiner because they are dependent upon themselves. Claims 23 and 24 have been amended to correct their dependencies.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 1, 3, 6 – 8, 12 – 19, 23, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Jones et al. (US No. 6,530,655) ("Jones"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In claim 1, Applicant recites a drip plate for use in a phase change ink jet printer using solid ink. The drip plate includes an upper portion and a lower pointed portion. The lower portion is not coplanar with the upper portion.

In claim 16, Applicant recites an ink loader for a phase change ink printer. The ink loader includes at least one channel having an entry end and an exit end and a melt assembly. The melt assembly includes a drip plate, a melt plate fastened to the upper second side of the drip plate, and a heating device thermally connected to one of the melt plate and the drip plate. The drip plate includes an upper portion having substantially flat upper first and second sides and a lower pointed portion having substantially flat lower first and second sides. The lower portion is not coplanar with the upper portion.

The Rejection to claims 1 and 16 should be withdrawn as the Examiner has not established that the prior art discloses all the elements of either claim 1 or claim 16. Specifically, the Examiner has not established that the prior art discloses a drip plate having a lower portion that is not coplanar with its upper portion. The Examiner asserts that this feature is shown and described in Jones. However, it is not. Jones shows a drip plate with a tapered angled lower portion. However, the lower portion is always coplanar with the upper portion. Therefore, Jones does not anticipate the present application.

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Claims 3, 6 – 8, 12 – 19, 23, and 26-27 should be allowed if claims 1 and 16 are allowed as claims 3, 6 – 8, and 12 – 15 depend from claim 1 and claims 17 – 19, 23, and 26 – 27 depend from claim 16.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 9 and 20 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones in view of Scheuhing (US No. 5,832,835) ("Scheuhing"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 9 and 20 should be allowed if claim 1 is allowed as claims 9 and 20 depend from claim 1 and include all the limitations of claim 1. The Examiner relies upon Jones to disclose a drip plate with a lower portion that is not coplanar with its upper portion. Jones does not show this. All the drip plates in Jones are shown with coplanar upper and lower portions. The Examiner has also not pointed to where this limitation is present in Scheuhing.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4, 5, 10, 11, 21, 22, 24 and 25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant is awaiting a final disposition on claims 1 and 16 before rewriting these claims in independent form.

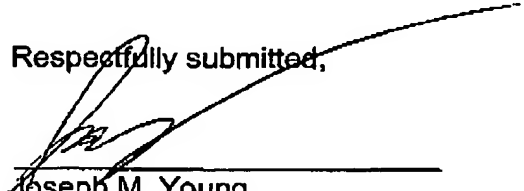
Conclusion

No additional fee is believed to be required for this amendment. However, the undersigned Xerox Corporation attorney hereby authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025. This also constitutes a request for any needed extension of time and authorization to charge all fees therefor to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025.

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A telephone interview is respectfully requested at the number listed below prior to any further Office Action, i.e., if the Examiner has any remaining questions or issues to address after this paper. The undersigned will be happy to discuss any further Examiner-proposed amendments as may be appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,



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JMY/rjc